



October 27, 2003

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W., TW-A325
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: *Ex Parte* Notice

In the Matter of Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service Seeks Comment
on the Commission's Rules Relating to High-Cost Universal Service Support and
the ETC Designation Process (CC Docket No. 96-45)

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On Thursday, October 23, 2003, Mary Mongold with Hardy Telecommunications Company, Michael Strand with the Montana Independent Telecommunications Systems, and Daniel Mitchell with the National Telecommunications Cooperative Association (NTCA) met with Matthew Brill, Senior Legal Advisor to Commissioner Abernathy, and Hector Mora, Intern to Commissioner Abernathy.

During the meeting the group discussed NTCA's positions related to issues concerning the portability of universal service support and the public interest test for designating eligible telecommunications carriers (ETCs) in rural incumbent local exchange carrier (ILEC) service areas.

In accordance with the Commission's rules, an original and two copies of this letter are being filed with the Secretary's Office. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact L. Marie Guillory at 703-351-2021.

Sincerely,

/s/ Daniel Mitchell
Daniel Mitchell
Senior Legal Counsel
Legal & Industry Division

cc: Matthew Brill
 Michael Strand